

## Message Text

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72

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DEAE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 IO-14 JUSE-00

NSAE-00 RSC-01 SNM-02 SY-04 TRSE-00 USIA-15 NSC-07

SCI-06 OMB-01 L-03 AID-20 DRC-01 HEW-08 MED-03 /116 W

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R 232359Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1791

C O N F I D E N T I A L MEXICO 4299

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR, MX

SUBJECT: NARCOTICS SUGGESTION FOR USG CONTACTS WITH GOM ON  
PREVENTION/TREATMENT SIDE

DEPT PASS TO SAODAP AND NIDA

REF: MEXICO 2090; SMITH/ALBERTI TELCON MAY 22, 1974

1. ALTHOUGH DR. GUIDO BELSASSO CONTINUES IN CHARGE OF MEXICAN CENTER FOR DRUG DEPENDENCY RESEARCH (CEMEF), WE CONTINUE HAVE UNEASY FEELING, EXPRESSED PARA 3 OF REFTTEL, THAT HIS POLITICAL FUTURE UNCERTAIN AT BEST. THIS IMPRESSION BASED PARTLY ON THE APPARENTLY LESS-THAN-FULL CONFIDENCE REPOSED IN HIM BY HIS BOSS, HEALTH SECRETARY JIMENEZ CANTU; AND PARTLY ON CRITICISM, BOTH PERSONAL AND PUBLISHED, OF THE COSTLINESS AND UNPRODUCTIVENESS OF CEMEF UNDER HIS ADMINISTRATION. AS POINTED OUT IN REFTTEL, BELSASSO'S PERSONALITY AND METHODS OF OPERATION HAVE MADE HIM A NUMBER OF ENEMIES. THERE IS ALSO CONSIDERABLE PROFESSIONAL CRITICISM OR JEALOUSY OF HIS POSITION, COMING FROM MEDICAL PERSONS IN OTHER BRANCHES OF PSYCHIATRY OR OTHER DISCIPLINES SUCH AS PHARMACOLOGY; FROM THOSE WHO BELIEVE BELSASSO'S POLITICAL AMBITIONS CAUSE HIM TO USE CEMEF AS A SPRINGBOARD TO FURTHER ADVANCEMENT; OR FROM THOSE WHO SIMPLY BELIEVE HE IS A  
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POOR ADMINISTRATOR WHO HAS NEGLECTED RESEARCH IN FAVOR

OF FLASHY PUBLIC RELATIONS.

2. FACT REMAINS THAT BELSASSO, CONTRARY TO SOME RUMORS AND GOSSIP, HAS NOT BEEN REMOVED. WE DO NOT KNOW HOW LIKELY THIS POSSIBILITY IS, BUT HE HIMSELF SHOWS NO INDICATION THAT HE EXPECTS LOSE HIS POSITION IN FORESEEABLE FUTURE. HE IS A HIGHLY INTELLIGENT (AND AT TIMES PERSONABLE) POLITICAL ANIMAL, AND HIS CLAIMS TO A CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA MAY WELL HAVE BASIS IN FACT. EARLIER THIS MONTH AMBASSADOR JOVA ATTENDED SMALL, VERY SELECT DINNER PARTY HOSTED BY AMBASSADOR CASTRO Y CASTRO, DIRECTOR-IN-CHIEF AT FONSEC, TO WHICH BELSASSO INVITED; HE OBVIOUSLY REMAINS VERY MUCH PERSONA GRATA IN SOME HIGH GOM CIRCLES.

3. SHOULD BE APPARENT FROM FOREGOING ANALYSIS THAT WE CANNOT NOW PREDICT BELSASSO'S FUTURE WITH ANY DEGREE OF ACCURACY. WE DO REMAIN REASONABLY CONFIDENT, HOWEVER, THAT CEMEF WOULD CONTINUE EVEN IF BELSASSO SHOULD BE REPLACED. WE FURTHER BELIEVE THAT USG SHOULD SEEK TO COVER ALL BETS AND SHOULD NOT RESTRICT ITS CONTACTS AND/OR SUPPORT TO CEMEF ALONE. FOR THAT REASON WE WELCOME AND ENCOURAGE DR. JEAN PAUL SMITH'S ONGOING CONTACTS WITH DR. VELASCO FERNANDEZ OF THE GOM'S INSTITUTE OF MENTAL HEALTH; OTHER USEFUL POINTS OF CONTACT MIGHT BE WITH DR. JOSE CARRANZA ACEVEDO, HEAD OF PHARMACOLOGY AT MEXICAN INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SECURITY (IMSS) AND DR. JULIAN VILLAREAL, DIRECTOR OF NEUROPSYCHO PHARMACOLOGY, MILES LABORATORIES. WE SUGGEST DR. SMITH PLAN TO SEE THESE LATTER TWO RESEARCHERS, AS WELL AS BELSASSO AND VELASCO, DURING HIS FORTHCOMING TRIP TO MEXICO. DEPENDING ON OUTCOME OF DR. SMITH'S CONVERSATIONS HERE, WE MAY BE IN POSITION TO RECOMMEND CONSIDERATION OF USG ASSISTANCE TO OTHER GOM AGENCIES IN ADDITION TO CEMEF.

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